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London. – Magdalen & Stockdale

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# THOUGHTS

ON THE PLAN FOR A

# *MAGDALEN-HOUSE*

FOR

## REPENTANT PROSTITUTES,

WITH THE

Several Reaſons for ſuch an Eſtabliſhment; the Cuſtom of other Nations with regard to ſuch Penitents; and the

## GREAT ADVANTAGES

Which will probably ariſe from this Inſtitution, upon political and

## RELIGIOUS PRINCIPLES.

Addreſſed to the

## PROMOTERS of this CHARITY.

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*By mercy and truth iniquity is purged.* Prov. XVI. ver. 6.

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## SECTION I.

*General view of the deſign. Reaſons for communicating theſe thoughts. General view of life. The application to the ſubject.*

IT is with the higheſt ſatisfaction I ſee the plan of your charity is ready to be carried into execution. The more I think of the objects of it, the more I am convinced of the propriety of your deſign. I apprehend you mean—1. To induce women, who have lived as *proſtitutes*, to forſake their evil courſe of life.—2. To open a retreat for them, where they may paſs their time in comfort and ſafety, under no other confinement than ſuch as ſhall be abſolutely neceſſary for their own preſervation, and what themſelves ſhall have voluntarily conſented to, without any legal power. —— 3. To employ them in the moſt uſeful manner, both for themſelves and the community, and by rendering them pious, induſtrious, and frugal, prepare them for a comfortable ſettlement in the world.—— 4. To eſtabliſh ſuch regulations and œconomy as ſhall at once ſeclude them, for a proper time, from any evil communication, and give them ſuch habits as ſhall recommend them to the ſober part of mankind. —— 5. To treat them with ſuch regard, as ſhall convince them that nothing more is meant than their own happineſs; and yet avoid ſhowing any ſuch indulgence as ſhall tempt the evil-minded to abuſe the charity, or which may diſqualify thoſe who are really penitent, from procuring a maintenance by virtuous induſtry when they ſhall return into the world. —— 6. To diſmiſs them whenever it ſhall appear for their ſervice; but not till they ſhall have acquired ſuch habits as promiſe fair to ſecure them from the fatal effects of idleneſs; nor 'till after

they ſhall have entitled themſelves to ſuch a certificate of their good behaviour, as will recommend them to uſeful and reputable employments.—— 7. To appropriate ſuch a ſhare of the produce of their induſtry to them, with the addition of ſuch other bounty, as ſhall be thought due to their merit, as may enable them to live with honor and reputation.— 8. To conduct this charity in ſuch a manner, that it ſhall be conſidered as a favor to be accepted; and, conſequently, totally inconſiſtent with the notion of *impriſonment.*

It will be a *glorious* taſk, indeed, to co-operate with heaven, as far as blind and indigent mortals can imitate their Maker, in curing a *diſeaſe* of the mind, much more fatal than *frenzy.* We are told, that "*the price of a good woman is beyond gold.*" The *ſincereſt joys* of life indeed flow from the conduct of *virtuous* women; and the *acuteſt miſeries* from the *vicious* part of the ſex. If you can convert *bad* women into *good* ones, it will be a work worthy the applauſe of Angels, who *rejoice at the converſion of ſinners:* and I hope the conſciouſneſs of your good intentions will advance *your own* happineſs, as the effects of your piety will neceſſarily promote the felicity of *others.*

How unworthy is that life which has not the good of mankind for its ruling principle! And how joyfully do his days paſs, to whom a cloſe attention to the welfare of his country, at once furniſhes the moſt intereſting *employment*, and the moſt delightful *amuſement.* Happy were it, if men in general could bring themſelves to this turn of mind: *Vice* and *Folly* would then have but little footing in the world. It is with this deſire, I would gladly catch ſome fleeting hours, retired from *noiſe and buſtle*, to examine my ſubject, as far as my thoughts will lead me, conſiſtently with the de-

ſign.

ſign. I am the more induced to make this my taſk, not having yet ſeen it handled with ſo much ſerioufneſs, as I think it deſerves; and though there are many more able pen-men than myſelf, the ſubject may not affect them at all, or not in the ſame manner as it does me. I intend to ſet it in different points of view; that, whilſt it affords you ſome entertainment, poſſibly it may reach the *hearts*, as well as the *underſtandings*, of our fellow-citizens.

It is a common obſervation of *very buſy*, and of *very idle* men, *that people are too indolent to read.* I apprehend this to be a great miſtake; for if it were *true*, there could *never* be ſuch armies of *writers* and *ſcriblers*; we could never pretend that the preſs ſupports our liberty; nor could we be ſo learned and inquiſitive a nation. Is there a ſubject we do not trace from its very firſt principles? Even the abſurdities which writers fall into, often lead to the truth. It is certain, there are many who have not, and many more who *think* they have not, *leiſure* to read; but, even theſe pin their faith chiefly on the report of thoſe who criticiſe books; or, on thoſe who *examine* if they contain any inſtruction. And as no ſubject has come before us, for a long time, ſo *new* as this, and yet ſo *intereſting*, ſome parts of it not perfectly underſtood, and others liable to be miſtaken, I confeſs I ſhall think the time I devote to this purpoſe *well emyloyed:* what I have already advanced on the ſubject, under different forms, will render the taſk the more eaſy to me.

We are all candidates for comfort, eaſe or happineſs! We all long for ſome diſtant good; and *Heaven* knows we *all* have need of *mercy!* To learn what we ought to do to pleaſe our Maker, and how to ſhun whatever may *offend* him, is the only concern of life which, in *ſtrict* propriety of

of language, demands our *conſtant* attention: it is that momentous buſineſs which, as we *zealouſly* purſue, or *careleſsly* neglect, ſtamps the character of wiſdom on the *beardleſs boy*, or of folly on the *hoary head*.—*What ſhall I do to be ſaved?* — How ſhall I moſt effectually ſerve my *God*, my *country*, and *mankind?* — This was not the queſtion of a hermit, contented to be *paſſively* virtuous, but of one whoſe buſy ſpirit engaged him in the *active* ſcenes of life; of one who had the happineſs to behold the *Meſſiah*, with his own eyes, and was anxious to give the higheſt proof of the moſt ſincere obedience to him, as his *Sovereign*, his *Lawgiver*, and his *Saviour*. The queſtion he aſked is, indeed, that which points out the true diſtinction between the *buſy wiſe man*, and the *buſy fool*; between him who *employs* the talents God has intruſted him with, and him who *ſquanders* them away on *trifles*.—Riches and honors do not always attend the paths of the virtuous, nor yet of men of underſtanding; but ſtill, whilſt we make a true eſtimate of life, we ſhall clearly diſcover, that virtue and underſtanding, which, in a religious ſenſe, mean one and the ſame thing, are ſo eſſential to us, that without them *all is vanity indeed!*

We ſee in the perſons of others, that our days *are truly but as ſhadows that depart, or as a dream when one awaketh*; yet ſtill we are apt to doat on this world. We believe that *the ſoul is immortal*; we are *convinced* that there is a ſtate of happineſs, and of miſery, after death; and yet how ſeldom do we act, in all reſpects, *agreeably* to ſuch belief! This would be the greateſt of all *wonders*, if we were not equally ſenſible of the *frailties* of human nature, and of the deluſions we ſo often fall into. At the ſame time we are compelled by *reaſon*, and the laws of our own minds, as well as by *faith* in the *attributes* of the *inviſible God*, to acquit *him* with regard to the duties which he requires of us. And tho' weak and indigent,

yet

yet when we contemplate the *amazing* properties of the ſoul, and conſider the *wonderful* frame of the body, we muſt entertain a *reverence* for ourſelves, eſpecially when we find that it is the *ſenſibility* of our weakneſs which puts us on our guard; it is this that *abſorbs* the pride to which our depravity ſo much inclines us; it *humbles* the ſoul; we confeſs our *dependence*; we *proſtrate* ourſelves, and *adore* the hand that made us!

Thus, in ſpite of our imperfections, in ſpite of the conſciouſneſs of our infirmities, we *march* on, and aſpire at a much higher glory, than *earthly ſplendor*, or the applauſe of men. Though ſo many of us *ſweat* under a *load* of *evils*, yet we are ſtill ſupported: a confidence in a future ſtate of happineſs, makes us *maſters* of the world. Wiſdom teaches us to value life, but it inſtructs us alſo to *conſent* to die; and death ſeems far preferable to a *repugnance* to the will of Heaven. The *true philoſopher*, as well as the *true ſoldier*, ſubmits to *diſcipline*, and follows his *leader*. He knows it to be at once his duty, and his honor, *to obey*. He *feels* the force of truth: he *exults* in the reflexion that he is *acting right*; and whether he triumphs, or is led in chains, he looks forward to the world unknown, ſtill perſuaded, that he ſhall one day be happy!

Such are the heights to which the *native greatneſs* of the ſoul conducts us. But, alas, it is equally true, that we are apt to *give way* to the ſolicitations of our ſenſes: *pleaſure*, with deluſive ſmiles, often tempts us to deſert our poſt. *Paſſion*, or *appetite*, *fancy*, or *opinion*, miſrepreſents things to us, and either flatters us into a belief of that which has *no exiſtence*, or entices us to purſue thoſe *fleeting* joys, which lead to *pain* and *ſorrow*. —— Hence it follows, that ſome *overlook*, and ſome *deſpiſe* the great

great law of life; whilſt *many* an unhappy mortal, is graſping at the *tranſient* moment, at the utmoſt hazard of *eternity!*

If life is thus pregnant with evils, and if this is the *general* ſtate of it, he who underſtands human nature beſt, will moſt readily compaſſionate thoſe, whoſe ſituation having early expoſed them to temptations, are now groaning under the *miſerable* bondage of vice; and are either tormented with anxious *forebodings*, or ſleeping with *ſecurity*, on the verge of *perdition!* We know, *that* "*offences muſt come, but woe to thoſe by whom they come.*" Let him to whom God has given power, *exert* that power to prevent the evil! He who ſearches into the heart, will ſoon diſcover the defects of it; and the moſt ready way to find the remedy for ſuch defects, is to be perſuaded that there is hardly any evil without its remedy. As creatures of one common nature, we are bound to take care of each other: the eſſence of religion conſiſts in it: and for this end we were ſent into the world. Nothing can be more obvious than this, ſince even the Son of God himſelf appeared on earth, charged with a commiſſion to ſave mankind, upon condition of their *repentance*. It is very apparent, that we are not to confine our regards to the preſent time, and the precarious events of human life; our concern muſt be extended to another *being:* the higheſt promiſes are made to him that is inſtrumental to the *ſalvation* of others; and what man can wiſh to ſuccour the naked and the hungry, and not graſp at the *golden* opportunity of *ſaving a ſoul from everlaſting perdition!*

SECTION

## SECTION II.

*The practicableneſs of this undertaking. The force of habit. Motives to this charity derived from a belief of the chriſtian religion. Fatal conſequences of the Libertiniſm of the common people. Senſe of ſhame remarkable in ſome women. Notions of honor amongſt women of education. Complaint of the want of people. Practice with regard to marriage. Some cauſes of there being ſo many common proſtitutes.*

THE moſt penetrating amongſt men, can ſee but a little way; and *means*, the beſt contrived, are not always adequate to the *end*: yet as human nature is ſtill the ſame, and as the promiſes of divine aſſiſtance are not withdrawn, the ſame cauſes will, probably, produce the ſame effects; and if that which has been done in one inſtance, may be expected in many, you have a ſtrong foundation to go upon.

*Habit* is the *axis* on which life turns. To acquire *good habits*, and to correct *bad* ones, is the ſum and the amount of life. By *habit* we act as if we were in *earneſt* with *God* and *men*; and by *habit* we become *triflers* in our commerce with heaven and earth. Nay more, by habit we abandon ourſelves to the gratification of ſenſe and appetite, and even exceed the bounds which are preſcribed to brutes: and by *habit* we are led to act agreeably to the dignity of our own nature, and to purſue what is fit to be done for the attainment of our proper happineſs.

To bring thoſe back to a ſenſe of virtue, who have been long accuſtomed to *baniſh reflexion*; or, in other words, to give a *habit of piety* to ſuch perſons as have contracted ſtrong habits of impiety, is a hard taſk; but, if proper means are uſed, we ſhall be inſenſibly led into a better opinion of human nature, than is generally entertained. And ſince divine providence now ſeems to point out the probable means of relieving *penitent proſtitutes*, it is our *duty* to try ſuch means, and to truſt in the aſſiſtance of that God *whoſe mercy is over all his works.*

Divines and philoſophers are not yet perfectly agreed, how far *virtue* is *natural* to the ſoul of man; and yet it is confeſſed, that *man* is by nature a *reaſonable* being, and that *reaſon* declares againſt every thing we believe to be *vicious.* Whatever name we give to the *propenſity* in queſtion, we know that nothing unhinges the whole frame, and diſtempers the *ſoul*, as well as the body, more, than giving up ourſelves to an *unlawful* gratification of this *appetite.* The expreſs command of God, both in the *literal ſenſe*, as well as the *ſpirit* of the *chriſtian* law, fixes the *conditions.* Thoſe who have kept alive any ſparks of their *native modeſty*, and are not given up, to what the royal prophet emphatically calls *an impudent mind*, will ever lament that *illegal* commerce, which is productive of ſo much miſchief: and as it is the *duty* of men, it will ever be their *honor*, to endevor to reſtore things to that *order*, which the God of nature certainly intended they *ſhould* be in; namely, that *reaſon* ſhould prevail over *paſſion* and *appetite.*

Every act of general beneficence carries with it ſome evidence of *a religious* diſpoſition, but yours requires a more than common zeal and vigilance. And though your enterprize may be conſidered as a *ſecular* concern, you are, in fact, acting the part of *champions* for your religion. Whilſt you

you remember you are *chriſtians*, look back and ſee how many thouſands have died in battle; how many have fallen ſacrifices to cruelty; and, thank Heaven, that many are yet *ready to die*, in ſupport of the *reputation* of that book of laws, in which we are told, *no fornicator, adulterer, or unclean perſon, ſhall enter into the kingdom of heaven.* The words are explicit, and free from ambiguity: reject the authority of this book, and there is an end of the *chriſtian* religion. We all know, that by the ſame *ſcripture* it is likewiſe ſaid, that if we *repent* of our ſins, and give timely and *ſincere* proof of our repentance, we ſhall be *pardoned.*—Shall the *omniſcient God* make a *law*, and will men, who pretend to *believe* in him, and to *love him with all their hearts*, be idle ſpectators of the violation of that law? Or, ſhall *he* offer conditions of *pardon*, and we not countenance and recommend ſuch conditions with all poſſible care and attention?

How truly melancholly is the ſituation of that *chriſtian* country, where a great number of people have ſo worn off a ſenſe of their *religion*, as to adopt notions and cuſtoms which the followers of *Mahommed* are aſhamed of. There is apparently ſuch a neglect of this divine prohibition, that the *word of God ſeems to be of no effect.* Something is wanting to be done! Under our preſent cuſtoms there is reaſon to fear, that the ſacred records in general, will grow into *contempt.* Moſt other breaches of the divine law are *unpremeditated*, or committed under a conſciouſneſs of the *guilt*, but this is done, not only *premeditatly*, but ſeemingly without any ſuch *conſciouſneſs.* Vice is become ſo *cheap*, and the ſpirit of modeſty at ſo low an ebb, *among many common people*, that it is hard to ſay, how far theſe acts of uncleanneſs may be carried; nor what *miſchiefs* they may produce. As *wiſdom* begins with the *fear of God*, the want of this *fear* has introduced ſuch *ignorance*, that many *ſeem* to have loſt all ſenſe of

duty, in the article of continence. Let us try then if we can prevent *ſome* of the calamitous effects of this exceſs, in which both the ſexes, and the *virtuous*, as well as the *vicious*, are ſo frequently involved.

It ſeems to be acknowledged, that the common people, eſpecially the inhabitants of *London*, are more abandoned than their fore-fathers were; and among the higher claſſes, many *refinements* in vice, and various methods of carrying on the *trade of luſt*, are introduced, to which our anceſtors were ſtrangers. At the ſame time it is worth *obſerving*, though not as a foundation to build upon, that the ſenſe of *ſhame* is ſo ſtrong in the breaſts of ſome of our women, that it has betrayed them into a *more horrible* crime than the iniquity complained of; witneſs the *murthers* that have been committed on infants, with no other view, than to conceal an *illegal amour*, at once demonſtrating a *ſad* diſtinction, between thoſe who have tranſgreſſed in *ſecret*, and thoſe who ſin in the face of the ſun; that one crime naturally follows another, and that the *fear of men* is exceedingly ſtronger than the *fear of God*.

Whilſt we contemplate this difference in guilt, we may obſerve in the characters of women in higher life, whoſe parents have been careful of them, that there is, amongſt us, a more exalted *ſenſe of honor*, and a truer notion of duty as grounded on the ſolid foundation of religious principles, than are generally to be met with amongſt the women of other countries.

The good propoſed by your undertaking is obvious in ſo many reſpects, that I hardly know where to *begin*, nor where I ſhall *end* my praiſe of it. *Firſt*, if you can ſtop the progreſs of thoſe diſeaſes, which are ſo fatal to the human ſpecies, you will ſave a number of ſubjects to the ſtate. *Next*, if you can

*check*

*check* libertiniſm, you will not only prevent great *miſery*, but alſo great *confuſion* among the lower claſſes of the people: and *laſtly*, in proportion as you leſſen the number of *proſtitutes*, it may be preſumed that the number of *marriages* will increaſe, as well as the number of ſouls ſaved.

Whether it ariſe from an *inordinate* deſire of augmenting our wealth, or from any opinion how much greater things might be done, were our numbers greater, but we frequently complain of the want of inhabitants. If it is true that we want people, the remedy ſeems to be in our own hands; I mean, if we aſſiſt the virtuous, countenance *foreigners*, and encourage *matrimony*. So far from purſuing any ſuch rules, we refine upon *politics*, and, forſaking the laws of God, we follow our own *inventions*, teaching the *common people* to do the ſame. We ſay the *ſoldier* ſhould not marry, that he may be the more ready to go to war; and the *ſailor* will be nothing but a *ſailor*, therefore it is in vain to encourage him to ſpend any *part of his time on ſhore*, in attending the care of a *family*. Theſe men are, indeed, left to their own inclinations, which, God knows, are generally bad enough: but we carry the thing farther, for we adopt it as a part of *family-policy*, that *domeſtics* ſhould not marry, and they are too often turned out of ſervice for it, as if they had by this act, forfeited their right to any farther countenance and protection as *ſervants*.

As to the practice of a great part of the *common people* in the *country*, it is well known that numbers of them come together *firſt*, and marry *afterwards*, if they think proper, which rarely happens, in any other caſe, than that of the woman proving with child. In a *partial* and *contracted* view of things, the practice of not marrying till a woman is pregnant, may not *appear* altogether *impolitic*; but, in *reality*, it is big with the greateſt miſchiefs.

miſchiefs. It is not only a great ſcandal to us, as believers in *Chriſt*, but it wears off the impreſſions of the *diſgrace* of *illegal love*; and muſt, in the iſſue, be attended with many pernicious conſequences.

Theſe, among many others, are the cauſes that our ſtreets ſwarm with *proſtitutes*; and, as if the diſtinction between the *rational*, animal, and the *brute* were deſtroyed, and the ſacred inſtitution of marriage exploded, ſuch exceſſes are committed as are ſhameful to recite. What then is to be done?—If notions of *private convenience*, or falſe *maxims*, induce men in higher life to decline marrying; if the gratification of *vanity*, or *artificial* wants, is preferred to the *order of nature*, and we deſpiſe that *ſimplicity* of manners which is the only true ſource of happineſs: if the bulk of the people are really *fooliſh* or *impious*, the ſtronger reaſon ariſes to endevor to prevent ſuch crowds of females becoming the prey of *penury* and *diſeaſe*. Let us ſuccour thoſe who *deſire* to be delivered out of their *ſad condition*. And, if marriage is the ſource of almoſt every relation that is dear or ſacred, every one who *thinks* ſo, muſt ſee that it is a *noble* taſk to promote your *deſign*. If we deliver a number of young women, in the *pride* of their *youth* and *charms*, from the *vileſt* of all kinds of *ſlavery*, and prevent their being *ſacrificed* at the *altars of pollution*, will it not ſo far promote *virtue and induſtry*, with *beauty* and *ſtrength* to defend the produce of our labors? Will it not ſo far preſerve us from the *ſad* effects of thoſe impurities, which not only efface the impreſſions of moral rectitude, but alſo *prey* on our very vitals?

SECTION

## SECTION III.

*The temptations to which young women are expoſed. The infamous conduct of many debauchees. Complaints of women with regard to the laws of honor. Vanity, and the love of admiration, great enemies to chaſtity. Opinion of the want of principles in women, injurious. The cruel treatment of proſtitutes. The dangerous conſequences of ſeducers, particularly in the character of bawds.*

THE deeper we examine this ſubject, the more we ſhall ſee how truly humane, and practically conſiſtent, your deſign is.

Of the whole race of *Adam*, there are ſurely none who ſtand in greater need of aſſiſtance, than theſe unhappy women. Can there be greater objects of commiſeration, than thoſe thoughtleſs girls, who are hurried into ruin by temptations, to which they have been expoſed, againſt their *intentions*; and *experience*, as well as *charity*, bids us think there are *many*, under theſe circumſtances. No woman, being young or handſome, can be too ſecure; but youth and beauty are things, which we muſt not expect the poſſeſſors will conceal. The impreſſions of religion and modeſty go a great way, but if theſe young women are not guarded by *others*, how ill qualified do too many of them prove in guarding *themſelves*, eſpecially when they are ſurrounded by ſnares, the moſt artfully, the moſt induſtrioufly laid, by thoſe who make a *trade* of *warring* againſt them. —— When women of *education*, who are ſuppoſed to be the guardians of their own honor, treſpaſs,

paſs, it is the greater ſhame; but the *poor* and *ignorant* are generally leſs ſecure againſt ſuch formidable ſeducers. —— What contrivances will not a depraved mind ſuggeſt to accompliſh its end? Where men are endowed with ſuperior faculties, and poſſeſs all the advantages which education and fortune afford, if they will proſtitute their *honor* to gratify their *appetite*, many will become their *prey*.

The diſtinctions of fortune, do not alter the *rights of mankind*. But when a man forgets the great law of *doing as he would be done by*, it is not ſurprizing he ſhould debauch *his neighbour's daughter*, at the very time that an offer of marriage with *his own*, would be deemed the higheſt inſolence: yet ſuch are the inconſiſtencies men fall into! And what can be ſaid of thoſe who pretend to *honor* and *juſtice*, and yet, after gratifying their inclinations, expoſe *her* to every kind of miſery, to whom they profeſſed the ſincereſt love?

How many are engaged by *promiſes*, or by words which men of honor underſtand as *promiſes*, which they never intended to fulfil, or do not in the leaſt regard. We muſt acknowledge this to be a *common* evil, but the commoneſs of it does not change its nature in the leaſt. If the conduct of the *gentleman* is of a worſe tendency to the general welfare, than that of the *porter*, he is ſo much a worſe member of ſociety: and it is not enough that theſe violators of the divine law, muſt expect a day of *retribution*, it is the part of the virtuous, and *truly brave*, to maintain the warfare of life, that where iniquity cannot be reſtrained, the *leaſt offender* may not be the *moſt puniſhed*.

But whilſt women juſtly complain of the conduct of men, in contriving the means of gratifying themſelves at the expence of their miſery, they muſt not murmur, that the *laws of honor*, in regard to *chaſtity*, are ſo much

much leſs rigid towards men, than to their own ſex. The *diſtinction* is very plain; nor does it in the leaſt preclude the due conſideration of what *human nature* is, more than what the duties of religion are.

If *virtue* is the ſupreme happineſs of accountable beings, that ſtate of life which renders virtue the moſt eaſy, is the *beſt*. Therefore if *fear*, and a ſenſe of *ſhame*, operate as ſtrongly as any other paſſions, it muſt follow, that in proportion as *women* are more awed by *fear* and *ſhame*, than *men*, they are more *happy* than men. She who argues from the conduct of men, as if *example* could warrant *libertiniſm*, contradicts *reaſon* and *common ſenſe*, as well as *religion*. Therefore, upon the face of this argument, however unequal the *judgment* of the world may *ſeem*, it would be dangerous to ſolicit for a *reverſe* of it. And whatever may be thought, by thoſe who are more inclined to find motives for deviating from the paths of virtue, than good reaſons to walk ſteadily in them, it is more eaſy to *imagine*, than *expreſs*, the effects of a *change* of cuſtom and opinion, even upon this very principle, *that the crime in queſtion is, in the ſight of God, the ſame in both ſexes.*

The remedy of this evil is, in ſome meaſure, in our own hands. If *half* as much pains was taken to impreſs the minds of the *female* world with juſt notions of their condition, and how to deport themſelves with *humility*, as there is to feed their *vanity*, we ſhould not ſee ſo many victims offered to incontinency. *Vanity*, and the *love of admiration*, have hurried more women into perdition, than all the other devices of the *devil*, or *man*. *Adulation* intoxicates men, but *admiration* turns the brains of women: and fond notions of dominion, have often perverted their hearts, till, like *tyrants*, they abuſed their *real power*, and fell a ſacrifice to thoſe whom they might have *go-*



*verned.*

*verned.* *Beauty* ſeldom fails of ſucceſs, if it is attended with good ſenſe and modeſty. The *Italians* ſay, *a handſome girl is born married*; but this is not always true of the *vain*, and ſtill leſs of the *profligate*.

In tracing *effects* back to their *cauſes*, it ſeems very reaſonable to conclude, that many of theſe unhappy proſtitutes, might have been in the full enjoyment of all thoſe comforts which their natural advantages would have afforded them, had they been properly conſidered by men, and well *inſtructed*. By this means they might have been reconciled to the condition in which providence had placed them. —— Some men entertain a ſtrange notion that women, in general, are governed only by *faſhion* and *caprice*, and from hence impute their virtue, not to *principle*, but to mere chance. If this were true, one might aſk, from what cauſe it ariſes, ſince it is certain, that women are *rational* and accountable, the ſame as men? If the father is wiſe, though he need not give them ſo much *learning*, he will inſtill as *great* and *noble ideas* in the minds of his *daughters*, as in thoſe of his *ſons*. It is not my buſineſs, at preſent, to enter upon the ſubject of *education* of the *poor* or *rich*, nor to find out how faulty *that* of our women is: that there are many *miſtakes* committed in it, is beyond all diſpute; but it would be but fair to ſay, how *men* generally *act*, for from hence we may beſt learn what *principles they* have. When the deſire of popular opinion, or the means of gratifying their *paſſions* and *appetites*, interfere with the *rule of right*, how do *they* generally *behave*? They ought always to think it their ſupreme happineſs even *to die* in defence of *virtue*; but, is this the caſe? — Men, in the fooliſhneſs of their hearts, are alſo often apt to entertain an opinion of a *ſuperiority* over women, very different from that which the author of nature has appointed. It ſeems to me that, for want of a proper *deference* for women, as creatures equally valuable, in the ſight of God, with themſelves,

ſelves, men are not under ſuch *awe* as this conſideration would promote, and are often betrayed into tranſgreſſions, which it is probable they would not otherwiſe have committed.

In juſtice to the female world, may it not alſo be fairly aſked, if virtue has not the ſame charms to captivate *their* hearts, and religion the ſame power to create a deteſtation of vice and folly in *their* minds, as in men's? With regard to women who have wandered from the paths of virtue, let thoſe who have examined only the foul corners of the heart, or pryed only into the *darkeſt* ſcenes of iniquity, argue as cogently as they pleaſe, even from real facts, they muſt in their turn indulge others, who know alſo from *experience*, that there is a native ingenuouſneſs in the minds of many of theſe women, that inclines them to wiſh for the *means* of repentance.

Uſe and cuſtom takes off ſome part of the force of miſery itſelf, and the heart, which does not *burſt* with a ſenſe of injuries, may become *callous* and inſenſible of them. If this were not the caſe, many of theſe proſtitutes would ſee themſelves the moſt abandoned of mankind. They would diſcover the ſtrange extravagance of revenging upon themſelves, the *crimes* of others; or if they imputed their misfortunes to their own indiſcretion, they would find but very little reaſon to live in *infamy*, merely becauſe their own paſſions firſt betrayed them. Many a poor girl might have ſhewn her *power* over him, who is now an *idle ſpectator* of her miſery: and many a one has been deſerted by her *friends*, becauſe they thought only of the *crime*, whilſt the world judges and condemns with *ſeverity*. Thus left to ſtruggle with the *tyranny of bawds*, and the *inſolence of debauchees*; followed by a train of evils, *infamy*, *poverty*, and *diſeaſe*, what can be the conſequence but a miſerable death, unrepenting of their ſins, unlamented even by their partners in iniquity! To enumerate inſtances, on the preſent occaſion, is

not proper, nor are they in the leaſt neceſſary, ſince it is no ſecret, either to the *virtuous* or the *vicious*, that many proſtitutes are in a worſe condition, than even the *brute* that periſhes. Every other animal is obedient to his *appetite*, but appetite has frequently no ſhare in the *promiſcuous* commerce of theſe women.—— Harlots are, in no country, treated with ſuch groſs indignities, as in this, ſo that one would almoſt wonder, how it happens that the ſame *pride*, which led them into the ſnare, does not induce more of them to *forſake* their evil courſe, at all hazards. —— Every one who conſiders the ſubject muſt ſee, from this ſingle circumſtance, how much theſe unhappy women are enſlaved by their *bad habits*.

As there is no nation which carries every thing that is *vile*, as well as every thing that is *virtuous*, higher than this, ſo there is, I believe, no city in the world, where ſuch rank enormities prevail, as in this great metropolis. —— There is an elegancy in *vice* as well as in *virtue*, and though it is the more dangerous, in ſome reſpects, on this account, yet ſtill it is a ſafe-guard againſt thoſe diſorders to which a brutiſh and profligate life expoſes mankind.—There is alſo a certain *delicacy* of manners eſſential to *good order*; and the diſtinctions which the *ſexes* ſhow to each other, is one great means of ſupporting that *order*. How dreadfully are things transformed with us!—We frequently *ſee* theſe women treated like *dogs*, and we *hear* thoſe tongues, which the *God of nature* deſigned ſhould ſoften the *diſtreſſes* of human life, and give a reliſh to its joys, uttering the *higheſt indecencies*, and the moſt *dreadful imprecations!* At the ſame time we acknowledge, that theſe young perſons are born in a *free* country, where *pure* religion is profeſſed; that many of them were educated in the principles of *virtue*; that all of them are entitled to the *protection* of men, and moſt aſſuredly intended by the wiſe and beneficent Father of mankind, as their *partners* in the

the ſocial joys of life: can we then *turn the glaſs*, and behold them the abject *ſlaves* of an abandoned *procureſs*, ſold both *body* and *ſoul* for *half a crown*, without being *fired* with a generous *indignation* for the cauſe of *humanity!*

We ſee, how deplorable *their* circumſtances are, who are thus abandoned. But this is not the only object: — your inſtitution calls on us to conſider ſeriouſly, with regard to *domeſtic comforts*, and the *pleaſing* expectations of *tender* parents, how often they are pluck'd in the bud, and blaſted by the *pernicious contrivances* of *bawds*. Whilſt theſe miniſters of *Lucifer* are ſupported in *ſplendor*, it is no wonder the victim to luſt ſhould be ornamented with *elegance*, and taught to practiſe all the blandiſhments which can infatuate a young man's mind. *Her ways* do, literally, *lead to the grave*. Nor is the deſtruction of health, or even the loſs of life, the greateſt evils which happen: the expences created by ſuch *illegal commerce*, are oftentimes followed by the ſale of a *man's honor*. Among men of meaner condition, whilſt ſome become ſacrifices in the hands of unſkilful ſurgeons, others, being no longer able to ſupply by *fair means*, the extravagance of bad women, are prompted to commit deſperate actions, which bring them to untimely death by the hands of juſtice: and I believe it will be found, amongſt *malefactors*, that two in three are in theſe circumſtances.

There is yet a more melancholly ſcene in *real life!* —The *agonies* of tender parents do not uſually riſe ſo high for their *ſons*, as for their *daughters*; and though it is a ſad truth, the *fear* of *everlaſting* puniſhment generally makes a much fainter impreſſion, than the dread of *temporal* evils. In the *firſt* caſe, the diſtreſs is equal with regard to both: in the *laſt*, the *parent* and the *daughter* are indeed the moſt *pitiable!* If we ſee her deluded by the

*intrigues*

*intrigues* of an abandoned procureſs, and follow her through the beaten track, from *guilt* to *diſeaſe*: if we behold her languiſhing under a *venereal* complaint, and ſtill ſubject to the *arbitrary* will of an *imperious* miſtreſs, who leaps over all the boundaries of humanity, to gratify her own *inſatiable* avarice, what a *dreadful ſcene* does it exhibit! Let us even exclude the thoughts of an *hereafter*, what *anguiſh* muſt it create in his breaſt, who *feels as a man*; much more if he *feels* as a *parent* too! Who can be a careleſs ſpectator, even in *imagination*, of ſo noble a part of the workmanſhip of heaven, treated with ſuch *groſs indignity*, and *expiring* under circumſtances ſo *ſhocking* to humanity, that they would draw compaſſion even for the ſufferings of a *brute animal*.

It is too well known, that many a venerable head is hurried to a grave by ſuch accidents; and that this is the caſe with great numbers of proſtitutes in their ſeveral degrees. Even the greateſt part of thoſe who are pampered in *private ſtews*, have ſeldom prudence to make any reſerve for a retreat; and if they do not fall by an early death, before they feel the *utmoſt* miſery of this *condition*, they are condemned to infeſt the ſtreets, where they ſpread contagion through a *much greater* part of both the ſexes, than is generally imagined; and many a *virtuous woman* has felt the dreadful effects of her huſband's irregularities.—If then we take in the whole ſcope of your deſign, it is pregnant with ſo many *great* and *good* effects, that all arguments againſt it appear as *contemptible* as, I hope, they will be found *fallacious*.

SECTION

## SECTION IV.

*Obſervations on the name of this inſtitution. Reflexions on the time of commencing this work. All charities ſubject to abuſes. The ſeveral objections to this anſwered. Neceſſity of confining this charity to penitent proſtitutes. Bad women not irreclaimable. Kind of perſons who will probably take refuge under this charity. The uſe of it, with regard to example.*

HITHERTO I have dwelt upon the *general* motives to eſtabliſh your *magdalen-houſe*; I will now be more *particular*. *Firſt*, give me leave to take notice of the *name of your charity*. It does not appear to me that *Mary Magdalen* was deficient in point of chaſtity, as is vulgarly underſtood, I rather imagine ſhe was not. It is certain, ſhe was a lady of diſtinction, and of a *great* and *noble* mind. Her *gratitude* for the miraculous cure performed upon her, was ſo remarkable, that her ſtory is related with the greateſt honor, and ſhe will ever ſtand fair in the records of fame. Your charity requires a zeal like hers: you are her *diſciples*, and the *dedication* of your inſtitution to her *memory*, is entirely conſiſtent with the honor due to her *character*; and, in this light, no name more proper could be given to it.

As to your *plan*, no-body expects to ſee it perfected without *experience*: the *trial* is as *new* in this country, as the *deſign* is *pious*; and it will be more eaſy to *add* what is *neceſſary*, than to *annul* that, which, upon trial, may

may be found ſuperfluous. Numerous regulations, however pretty in *theory*, in *execution* ſeldom produce the effects intended.

The *time* in which you begin this good work, is alſo a circumſtance that ſtrikes me, and preſages good to the undertaking. Without indulging any *enthuſiaſtic* opinion, methinks there is more than a concurrence of common cauſes, to induce you to make the attempt at this juncture. As *war* neceſſarily occaſions devaſtation, we are called on to think of the propereſt means of ſaving as many lives as poſſible. To do this in ſuch a manner, as religion and good policy point out, each in his reſpective province, requires almoſt as much ſkill and reſolution, as even the *arduous* affairs of war.

The *omniſcient God* only knows what the event of the preſent ſtruggle will be! — It is true, many clouds are diſperſed, but many are ſtill gathering: and there is much reaſon to believe, that rivers of human blood may yet be ſpilt, before the affair is every where decided. To *think* like *men*, will not prevent our *acting* like *warriors*. Our tranſgreſſions are numerous, but heaven, perhaps, will take the ſide of this *defenſive war*: and let us imitate the example of thoſe troops, amongſt whom *piety* is an eſſential part of *diſcipline*, and who are carried on by ſo noble a kind of *military enthuſiaſm*, that it ſeems as if *heaven* and *earth* appear to them but as *one object*. —— You are now engaged in a *domeſtic* affair, which, however trivial it may appear to ſome, demands the *ſteadieſt* reſolution, the *pureſt* zeal, the moſt *ſeraphic* benevolence. And ſince all the deeds of men are regiſtered in the books of heaven, let us at once ſolicit for favor to our *arms*, and for *mercy* for our *offences*. Let us eſtabliſh a *charity*, unknown

known to our forefathers, even in the beſt of days. Who can limit the *good* which it may do, or the *bleſſings* which it may draw down upon us!

You are ſenſible, that all charities are ſubject to ſome *abuſes*, but I know that you are armed *at all points*. Nothing is perfect in this world; but, conſidering the *corrupt ſtate* of the people of this land, it is amazing with what a purity of conduct, many public charitable inſtitutions are conducted; and whoever draws any concluſion from the evils they are ſubject to, that there ſhould be no ſuch *charities*, will ſurely expoſe himſelf to be ſtoned to death as an enemy to *religion*, and his *country*. Things are ſometimes more *difficult* to execute, than was imagined; ſo are they frequently more *eaſy* too, than was conceived. If we indulge ourſelves in *refinements*, inſtead of correcting what we find amiſs, we may bewilder ourſelves in fruitleſs reſearches, without rendering our *morals*, or our *politics*, in any degree the better. The preſent object of *your* attention will no more admit of empty ſpeculation, than of a *languid* indifference: we muſt intereſt our *hearts*, as well as our *heads*, or we ſhall never carry ſuch a buſineſs through with a becoming alacrity. This we owe to the immediate ſervice of theſe poor women, and moreover, it is our duty to convince other nations, as well as ourſelves, that we are capable of *executing* whatever we think right to undertake.

It is no *pleaſing* conſideration, but it ſeems *neceſſary* to take notice, on this occaſion, that every effort out of the ordinary track, to ſupport the cauſe of *reaſon* and *religion*, appears to ſome people as an *extravagant* attempt; though, in reality, the *extravagance* conſiſts in their paſſive deſertion of the intereſt of *reaſon* and *religion*. A cloſe adherence to ſome political principles, however well grounded in obſervation, not only *depreciates* human nature, but betrays us

into an opinion, that our *efforts* to obey the laws of God, in certain inſtances, are *romantic* and ridiculous. It is thus men loſe their reverence for human nature; they firſt ſteel their hearts to a ſenſe of human miſery; and the tranſition then becomes eaſy, to leave *reaſon* and *religion* to take care of themſelves. But theſe politicians ſhould remember, that was there nothing more in view than *political* prudence, with regard to the increaſe of the ſpecies, and the good order of the ſtate, there is the utmoſt reaſon to check the progreſs of this ſpecies of iniquity. For, as *matrimony* is the moſt certain means of augmenting the number of people, and the trueſt cement of *civil* ſociety, though we cannot *ſuppreſs* whoredom, it is ſurely no *ſmall* object to *diſcourage* it.

Upon the whole, I think it is wonderful that we ſee *ſo little ridicule* prevail on this occaſion: in honor to the *good ſenſe*, as well as the *piety* of this nation, we may obſerve, that there has been no *wit* diſplayed againſt the deſign, but ſuch as is below notice. The difficulty that ariſes in ſome *ſerious* minds, from a ſuppoſition that *idleneſs* and *debauchery* are habits not to be ſubdued by a *ſimple*, *regular*, and *laborious* life, is an argument which proves too much; it is ſaying, theſe habits cannot be ſubdued at all. And thoſe who do not yet favor your charity, from an opinion, that although whoredom is confeſſedly productive of the greateſt miſchief, yet that it is a *neceſſary evil*; even theſe, I ſay, will, upon mature reflexion, learn, from their own principles, if they can find none better, to draw concluſions in behalf of ſo humane, ſo benevolent an undertaking as yours.

Granting that mankind are generally ſo loſt to a ſenſe of their own *importance*, as to repent more of their *follies*, than of their *ſins*, and rather wiſh for the *means* of gratifying their *paſſions*, than for that kind of life which

which renders *virtue* moſt eaſy to be acquired: granting all this, is it not reaſonable to think, that the eſtabliſhment of a *charity* of this nature will, in the iſſue, be productive of great *good?* The *principle* you ſet out upon, of introducing young women to a life of *piety* and *induſtry*, who have been uſed to a life of ſcandalous *impiety*, and ſhameleſs *idleneſs*, muſt make impreſſions even on *their* minds, who will never come within the walls of your houſe, as well as on thoſe who will become the inhabitants of it. There is ſomething *epidemical* in *virtue*, as well as in *vice*, eſpecially when ſuch proofs of ſincerity are given, as you demonſtrate. To ſuppoſe that any body will be the worſe for your charity, is going a great way indeed: we may as well ſuppoſe, that *men* will ſquander their fortunes in hopes of an *alms-houſe*; or break their legs becauſe there are *ſurgeons*, as that *women* will become *proſtitutes*, becauſe the means of *labor* and *repentance* are offered them.

The religion of Chriſt is diſtinguiſhed by that kind of charity, which leads us *even to wiſh to die* for the *ſervice* of mankind: it teaches its votaries *to be all things, to all men, in hopes of winning ſome*: and it is as certainly true, that the tears of *virtue* have more charms to captivate the hearts, of thoſe who *really* love her, than the loudeſt peals of laughter to exillerate *their* ſpirits, who think only how they ſhall enjoy the preſent moment.

The ſeeming difficulty that is ſtarted, by demanding, if it is *neceſſary* that a girl muſt be a *proſtitute*, in order to be *qualified* for your charity, is beſt anſwered by aſking another queſtion: *If an hoſpital is erected for ſetting broken limbs, would you receive into it, her who only complains of a fever?* I apprehend, the end and deſign of your inſtitution will be ſoon perverted, if it is not abſolutely reſerved for thoſe who call

themſelves, and really appear to be, *repenting proſtitutes.* She who is not a *proſtitute*, or not known to be ſuch, is ſuppoſed to have a *character*, and may be admitted to ſerve in a family, and, conſequently, is not a proper object of the care of your charity; and, ſurely, no girl will become a *proſtitute*, becauſe ſhe may have an opportunity to *repent* of having been ſo; more, than women will deſire to become objects of charity, becauſe bread is ſometimes given at a rich man's door. It is alſo reaſonable to conclude, that thoſe only who have tranſgreſſed, and are *really penitent*, will *ſubmit* to *appear* as penitents; and, what is more, to be *confined*; ſince the confinement, however ſhort it may happen to be, can be ſupportable only to thoſe who *mean* what they *profeſs.*

To ſay that you *countenance vice*, becauſe you *relieve* the *vicious*, is abſurd, and as little true in *fact*, as in the *intention.* Every one who wiſhes well to mankind muſt ſee, that, in reſentment of the groſs enormities committed, the friends to this charity take the moſt effectual method to *recover* thoſe who are enthralled, loſt and undone. The *law* of *God*, *zeal* for *liberty*, the *love* of your *country*, and the *duty* you owe to your *fellow-creatures*, earneſtly call on you to try the *experiment*; and to *ſee* what *can* be done for their ſervice. We all know what great difficulties theſe unhappy women labor under: and how very important your aſſiſtance may be, to ſuch as *would* repent, if they knew how to obtain, were it only a *bare ſupport.*

Some of the unhappy women in queſtion, have *ſenſe* enough to *ſee* themſelves become the *ſlaves*, the *miſerable ſlaves* of an abandoned bawd; and is it to be conceived, that *many* of them do not *wiſh* to be ſet at *liberty?* If a door is opened to them, is it not *probable* that *ſome* of them will come in? *Go, and ſin no more*, was the ſentence of the Savior of mankind, to one who, it is ſuppoſed, was ſuch a *penitent* as yours may be. You may

ſay,

ſay, *come and learn how to repent. You have done great miſchief to yourſelf, and to others alſo, we will teach you to be happy in yourſelf, and to do good to mankind.*

As to the kind of perſons who will become petitioners for your mercy, you may judge by thoſe who have already offered themſelves, before your doors are opened; and it is probable, that the moſt intelligent and ingenuous girls, who have had ſome education, and remain with ſome impreſſions of religion on their minds, or thoſe who are *young* in iniquity, will be the firſt, and always the moſt ready to accept your offer. When women are reſtored to health, and diſcharged from hoſpitals, ſuch as contracted their diſeaſe by proſtitution, have *generally* returned to their former courſe, as a dog to his vomit; but many of theſe, whether from a *ſenſe of duty*, or *of miſery*, will certainly accept the invitation which is given them.

There are other objects who will probably covet this retreat; thoſe who have *parents*, *friends*, or *relations*, whom they apprehend will be reconciled to them, whenever they ſhall give proof of their real repentance. By means of the *Lock* and other *hoſpitals* many will have it in their power to preſent themſelves, not only as penitent prodigals, but with the more ſincerity of heart, as they will be free from pain and diſeaſe. She who wiſhes to return to her *obedience* to the *parent of mankind*, may ſurely hope to be received; and ſhe who would make her peace with her *natural* father, and will purſue her own happineſs, may with equal propriety, by this means, really return to him and ſay, "*Father I have ſinned againſt heaven, and in thy ſight, and am not worthy to be called thy child.*" And will ſhe not meet a kind reception? Will not ſuch a declaration find its way to his *heart*? Will he who can feel, though it were but a little, the *power* of religion,

or

or the force of *parental love*, refuſe to receive her? *Can he*, whoſe heart is not ſteeled to the impulſes of humanity, forbear to ſympathiſe in *tears of forgiveneſs*, with *tears of real repentance*? Under a conſciouſneſs of paſt guilt, ſuch *confeſſion* is ſurely as natural to the *ſoul*, as the *evil* which occaſioned it was to the *body*; and we may entertain the higheſt hopes, that your *charity* will be a means of reconciling many a poor girl to her parents and her friends, who otherwiſe would be entirely loſt to them, to her country, and to her God!

I cannot *check* my thoughts in carrying the *benefits* of your charity ſtill farther. Your deſign, in favor of *penitent proſtitutes* will, in time, weaken the influence even of thoſe who are not *penitent*; and let the number of *penitents* be ever ſo ſmall, it will ſo far leſſen the number of *proſtitutes* in general. As an *addition* to the *labors* of the *pulpit*, and in *oppoſition* to many *dramatic writers*, you will give proof that *laymen*, as well as the *clergy*, intereſt themſelves in the cauſe of religion; whilſt we convince the world, that we know our intereſt too well as *politicians*, to neglect *any means* of preſerving the lives of our fellow-ſubjects, or of promoting *uſeful induſtry*.

Will it not ſtrike the hearts, even of the moſt prophane, when they ſee you ſhow an *anxious* concern for the *immortal* happineſs of your fellow-creatures; and a pious reſentment of the *diſtreſſes* of theſe women? This will ſurely never create *impenitence*; nor render the evil you mean to *cure*, more fatal: ſuch an apprehenſion is not conſiſtent with any common principle. Though it is confeſſed, that we are the moſt *ingeniouſly iniquitous* of any nation under the cope of heaven, to *abuſe* and *fruſtrate* the good intentions of ſalutary laws, and pious inſtitutions, can any one ſuppoſe, that we ſhall *ſtrengthen* our enemies by *dividing* their forces; or ſucceed the leſs in battle,

tle, by uſing *new* engines of war, hitherto unpractiſed, when the *old* method of fighting has been found ſo ineffectual ?

To ſuppoſe that it is beyond the power of a *judicious*, and *zealous divine*, to acquaint theſe women of the *value* of their ſouls, would not be doing ſuch honor to the clergy, as they deſerve. As you have made choice of a *chaplain*, chuſe alſo with propriety the objects you admit, and we *ought* to expect great good from the inſtitution. As the deſign is ſo peculiarly calculated to inſpire theſe women with a ſenſe of religion, there is the utmoſt reaſon to hope, that many who are the objects of it, will paſs the remainder of their days in ſuch a manner, as to draw down *bleſſings* on your heads ; and whilſt it does the benefactors to this charity great *honor*, it will do them greater *pleaſure* too, than they could derive from the higheſt indulgencies of their paſſions, or the moſt laviſh gratification of their *vanity*. Proceed then cheerfully in the taſk ; if it proves arduous, the greater applauſe will be due to thoſe who ſubſcribe to the ſupport of it.

SECTION

## SECTION V.

*The common notion of mankind with regard to proſtitutes. The chriſtian world particularly diſtinguiſhed for charities of every kind. The humor of this nation for novelty. Inſtitutions for the reception of penitent proſtitutes in* Holland, Germany, France, Spain, *and* Italy. *The police of* Rome *with regard to proſtitutes.*

EVERY nation has ſomething peculiar to itſelf: their genius, their laws, and particularly their religion, generally create a great difference in their manners and cuſtoms. Hence it is obvious, that an eſtabliſhment which is very conſiſtent in one country, may be abſurd in another. Yet, as human nature is ſtill the ſame, and the propenſity to ſenſual gratifications differs very little, it is no wonder that there ſhould be ſome points in which men agree. With regard to the duties of *humanity*, we ſee that the moſt barbarous people, whoſe notions of the *deity* are dark and perplexed, ſtill think it their duty to preſerve their fellow-creatures, unleſs there appears good reaſons for deſtroying any of them, and theſe reaſons are generally founded in the firſt law of nature, *ſelf-preſervation*. In all free and civilized ſtates, the firſt principle is, *ſave your neighbour, if he has not forfeited his life to the laws, and you ſave yourſelf:* and indeed, not to preſerve thoſe, whom it is in our power to preſerve, comes next in order to the actual deſtroying of them.

The

The *chriſtian* world is diſtinguiſhed by the moſt extenſive *benevolence*, at the ſame time that the religion of Chriſt enjoins a ſtricter *purity*, than is known under any other faith. The *parabolical* ſtory of the *good Samaritan*, which ſtands upon ſuch honorable record, leads us to the trueſt knowledge of the eternal obligations of Charity. The *traveller* was fallen among *thieves:* he was not queſtioned how it came to paſs, or if his own indiſcretion was concerned in it; he was grievouſly *wounded*, and in danger of periſhing, therefore this truly good man, thought it his duty to relieve him. No difference in faith, or country, no opinions in politics, influenced his conduct, it was enough that this traveller was a *man*, and in *great diſtreſs*.

To bring the matter yet *more home*, let us conſider what the practice of other chriſtians is, in regard to public charities, for the relief of ſuch proſtitutes as are inclined to repent of their ſins. — The genius of this nation leads us to be pleaſed with *novelty*, but it does not follow that when *old* things are *erroneous*, or defective, *new* ones ſhould not be countenanced. We think ourſelves much *wiſer* than moſt other nations, yet, in regard to the ſubject before us, we are many years behind ſeveral of them. Motives of *policy*, as well as a ſenſe of *moral* and *religious* obligation, have erected many inſtitutions of this kind, which have been ſupported by ſome of the greateſt, and nobleſt minded perſons of both ſexes, in *Italy*, *France*, *Spain*, and ſeveral other countries. In *Holland* they have ſuch an eſtabliſhment, differing from the others, for it is not of the *monaſtic* kind, but there are ſome circumſtances relating to the conduct of it, which, in my judgment, do not recommend it as an exact model to us.

In *Amſterdam* there are many houſes of *labor:* the *Dutch* know well how to employ the profligate as well as the poor. One of theſe houſes is

called the *Spinhuis.* "Here the women work, and by that means more than ſupport themſelves. In a year or two, their faces, by the natural change of inhabitants in that country, are forgotten as proſtitutes; and when they have a mind to come out, the character they have obtained in that houſe of ſobriety and induſtry, is allowed to be a ſufficient recommendation to any family. But there are other circumſtances which attend their ſituation: once or twice a year they walk in a kind of gallery, and appear, as ſervants do at a ſtatute fair, in the different counties of *England.* Sailors juſt landed, and who have neither time nor inclination for long courtſhip, often marry them; the *ſtates* give their conſent, and ſometimes a ſmall fortune; and many perſons, from proſtitutes, have been made *joyful mothers of children.* — In a year or two, if they chuſe to ſtay, all ill-natured ſtories die: and there are many inſtances of men, who have gloried in thus ſaving the unfortunate." The author goes on and aſks, "How many parents, in an hour of kind relenting, might, by theſe means, find out their daughters again, which it would tire one out to do in this metropolis. Changing names, and places of abode, renders this impoſſible, and many a poor girl *dies in an hoſpital, or a priſon,* at the very inſtant her friends are in ſearch of her, and willing to bring her home."

The inſtitution above mentioned has exiſted ever ſince 1596. when the houſe was built by the *regency.* Many who were beggars, or lived in *ſtews,* were put in here, and maintained at the expence of the city. The ſenſe of the inſcription over the door is, *Do not fear: I revenge myſelf not, of the* evil, *but I compel to do good. My hand is ſevere, but my heart is friendly.* — In this building are ſhut up different kinds of people, in different apartments; ſome to be puniſhed corporally for their offences; ſome only ſimply ſet to work for their debaucheries, as obſerved above. Here the Bible is read to them whilſt they

they are at work; they alſo ſing pſalms and ſpiritual ſongs, and other means are uſed to eſtrange them from vice, and encourage them in virtue; but people are permitted to ſee them, *for money*, which I apprehend, in ſome meaſure, deſtroys the intention of the inſtitution. — Here are other private apartments, where young women, who are viciouſly inclined, are occaſionally ſhut up at the requeſt of their parents, till ſuch time as they ſhew tokens of repentance. I mention theſe particulars, not ſo much as a means proper for us to chaſtiſe the turbulent and vicious, as a practice adopted by a people, *once* famed for good diſcipline, as well as renowned in arms.

There is an order of penitents at *Merſailles*, eſtabliſhed about the year 1272. with a view to engage women, who had proſtituted their honor, to return to virtue. In 1452 there was a foundation of the ſame kind at *Metz*. At *Naples* there was an order eſtabliſhed in 1314 (or as ſome writers mention, in 1324) for harlots, under the name of *Magdalens*.— About the *fifteenth* century, there was another eſtabliſhment of the ſame kind, commenced at *Paris*, for thoſe unhappy women who groaned under the crime of proſtitution, and deſired to devote themſelves to heaven, and atone for their miſdeeds. Among others I find this remarkable circumſtance, that none were to be received after *thirty-five* years of age. This order was branched out, and we ſee, ſoon after, there were *Magdalens*, and *Magdelanettes*, at *Rouen* and *Bourdeaux*, being convents to receive theſe kind of ſinners, and four nuns of one of the firſt orders at *Paris*, were employed to regulate the conduct of theſe penitents. This proved ſo laborious a taſk, theſe nuns were relieved from time to time. In theſe places it was prohibited, under pain of excommunication, to receive any but real harlots. Another order was founded at *Seville*, in 1550, for ſuch women as

had followed a licentious life, and, being touched with remorſe, were become penitents.

In *Rome*, a convent of this ſort was eſtabliſhed ſo long ſince as 626, dedicated to *Mary Magdalen*, who is conſidered as the patroneſs of *penitents*. Pope *Leo* X. afterwards confirmed the ſame. *Clement* VIII. ordered, that all the effects of public or private harlots, who died inteſtate, ſhould devolve to this monaſtery; or, if they made a *will*, it ſhould be null, unleſs they bequeathed a fifth part of their goods, to this inſtitution. — There are charities of this kind in almoſt every city in *Italy*, and many others in *France*, which need not be enumerated at preſent. It may, however, illuſtrate the ſubject, to take notice, that in ſome of theſe *retreats* there are of *three* diſtinctions; *one* of St. *Magdalen*, who make *vows*; *one* of St. *Martha*, who are not admitted to make *vows*; and *one* of St. *Lazarus*, who are detained by force.

Thus we may ſee what the practice of *chriſtians* has long been in *popiſh* countries. Thank heaven we know, that the *parade* of *papal* vanity, is the genuine produce of groſs *ignorance* and *ſuperſtition*: but I apprehend, that religion has not been the only motive; and in honor to the female world, it muſt be remembered, that ladies of great fortune and diſtinction, have had the moſt merit in the eſtabliſhment of theſe charities. It may be alſo preſumed, that the *tenderneſs* which the wiſe and benignant author of nature has implanted in the human breaſt, has had a great ſhare in every inſtitution of this kind. Nor does this *paſſion*, for ſo we may juſtly call it, predominate leaſt in thoſe, whoſe *imaginations* are the moſt *chaſtiſed*, or the deceptions of their *fancy* beſt underſtood: on the contrary, we find that the moſt vicious, whoſe paſſions, in general, are the leaſt *tamed*, have

alſo

alſo the leaſt ſenſe of the miſeries their vices create. This is clearly evinced by the conduct of the generality of *men*, with regard to *women*, in the inſtance of *illegal* commerce.

It is, indeed, one of the abſurd tenets of the *Romiſh* church, to engage people to make *vows*, and to ſhut them entirely from the world, whether their hearts ſhall afterwards ſubſcribe to ſuch ſecluſion or not; but this is not the caſe in all inſtances, even with that church, as appears from what I have mentioned above; and I am ſure it will not be the leſs agreeable to the purity of genuine chriſtianity, nor the leſs conſiſtent with the wiſeſt policy, to afford theſe unhappy women a *temporary* retreat, where *piety* may be ſupported by *labor*, and where the united force of theſe, will qualify them effectually for both worlds. Here no *incenſe* will be offered, but the pure flames of devotion; nor will any *vows* be required: it may be hoped, indeed, they will be inſpired with a *reſolution* to die, rather than abandon *virtue*, to which they profeſs themſelves to be votaries. Thus may they learn what it is to act like *accountable* beings! When they return into the world, they will know how to ſhun temptation, and, however diſguiſed under ſpecious appearances, they will fly from it as from the teeth of a ſerpent. By ſuch means they may at length advance the cauſe of *true religion*, promote the welfare of their country, do honor to human nature, and provide for their *lives*; and when *death* comes, ſubmit gracefully, and look forward with joyful hopes of everlaſting happineſs.

Thus have I collected theſe inſtances, and drawn theſe concluſions, to ſhew what the common ſenſe of mankind has been in regard to the *means of repentance* afforded, for this kind of violation of the divine law. I muſt now mention the *police* in ſome of thoſe very countries where ſuch indulgence

indulgence is ſhewn. It has been a received notion amongſt us, that in *Rome*, and ſeveral other places, theſe women are *licenſed*, or tolerated; and it is true, that they are under *regulations*, as a part of the *police* of that city, but not in the *manner* as is generally apprehended. When a woman is detected, or known to live in this ſtate of licentiouſneſs, ſhe is ſummoned before a *magiſtrate*, who declares the reaſon of it in theſe terms:

*You are impeached of being guilty of proſtitution, and of making a trade of it. If you are inclined to repent, you may be received into the houſe of penitents, (a) where you will be properly employed, and taken good care of. If you will not accept of this offer, and are detected again, you muſt enter your name at the public regiſter, as a proſtitute, and be ſubject to the following regulations, for the breach of which you will be ſeverely chaſtiſed.*

1ſt. *You ſhall not appear on any account, except in a certain diſtrict (b).*

2dly. *You ſhall not refuſe any man who may aſk you, except on ſundays or holidays; it muſt not be before ſuch an hour, nor after ſuch an hour (c).*

3dly. *If you live on the ground floor, you are to take but one ſhilling; on the firſt floor one ſhilling and ſixpence; and on the ſecond you may take two ſhillings (d).*

4thly. *You are to receive but one man at a time to your apartment, under ſevere penalties, which will be exacted of you, upon information.*

5thly. *You are not entitled to receive any benefit, from any hoſpital or pariſh.*

6thly.

(a) *Le Convertite.* (b) Places mentioned. (c) Hours mentioned.
(d) About this value: the *Italian* houſes differ from ours, as to the eſtimation of different floors.

6thly. *You have no right to appeal to juſtice for any inſult, or debt, acts of cruelty excepted.*

7thly. *Your oath ſhall not be valid, except in caſe of robbery or murder.*

8thly. *You are not entitled to any aſylum hereafter, except to be received to hard labor.*

9thly. *You are to be ſubject to ſuch future laws and regulations, as may be hereafter made for the incorrigible:* and,

Laſtly. *You are not entitled to chriſtian burial.*

Some of theſe articles, in a *free* country, would be thought hard terms, even for a proſtitute: but ſurely a perſon dying in a ſtate of *premeditated* proſtitution, ſeems to forfeit a title to *chriſtian burial.* Can the *burial ſervice* be read over ſuch a body? *Our dearly beloved ſiſter departed in ſure and certain hope of a bleſſed reſurrection,* may be conſidered as *ſure* and *certain* mockery.

How far the *Italians* adhere to theſe rules, I do not venture to pronounce, but this is the light in which their *civil* and *eccleſiaſtical* laws regard proſtitution. It is not eſſential to my preſent purpoſe to conſider any further, the nature of theſe inſtitutions, nor what were the motives to the eſtabliſhment of them: *you mean* to ſave a number of poor helpleſs creatures from periſhing; to remove, ſo far as the effects of your charity ſhall extend, one *cauſe* of the *decreaſe*, or *hindrance of the greater increaſe* of the people of this land; to employ theſe women in uſeful labor, and to habituate them to a religious life: and ſurely this is an object moſt highly worthy of your attention, and will as ſurely entitle you to the applauſe of your fellow-ſubjects and citizens!

SECTION

## SECTION VI.

*The inefficacy of our laws. Liberty and virtue interwoven. The advantage of zealous magiſtrates. The infamous practices of keepers of bawdy-houſes. The neceſſity of correcting this abuſe, in order to render this charity effectual. The advantage of giving the penitents part of the produce of their labor. The utility of giving ſmall portions, or donations, upon the marriage of thoſe who are reclaimed. Hoſpitals appropriated to the cure of venereal diſtempers will encreaſe in reputation, by means of this charity. This inſtitution not extended to the aged and diſtempered.*

IT has been often debated how far it is adviſeable, ſuppoſing it were practicable, *totally* to ſuppreſs proſtitutes. The ſubject is *delicate*, not *neceſſary* to be diſcuſſed, and will hardly admit of a ſtrict examination. Let it ſuffice that it is, or ſhould be, in the power of the *civil magiſtrate*, to drive proſtitutes from the public ſtreets, and remove every dangerous temptation to the unwary youth.

As to the inefficacy of our *laws* to accompliſh a reformation, it is but too obvious from experience, which is the beſt guide of life, that we want either *ſkill* to make, or *virtue* to execute, any law to anſwer the purpoſe in all reſpects; and, indeed, it is much eaſier to talk of ſuch laws, than to frame and adapt them to our religion and conſtitution. This gives us a ſtriking proof, that *true religion*, and *true politics*, cannot be long ſupported, they will ever be in a tottering condition, unleſs the virtue of individuals comes in aid of them.

It is certain, that *rods were made for the backs of fools*; but it is alſo certain, that ſeverity of ſome kinds brings on as great *evils* as it *cures*. Are we really ambitious of being *free*; let us then remember, that *liberty and virtue are twin-born, and deſcended from heaven at the ſame time:* and that the inexpreſſible bleſſings which *liberty* beſtows on mankind, can be enjoyed no longer than we offer our devotion at the ſhrine of *virtue*: if once we totally neglect, or wantonly deſpiſe *virtue*, not even the ſmiles of *princes*, nor the *favor* of the *great*, are half ſo precarious as *liberty*. —— If proſtitution were puniſhed with death, ſhould we not think it tyranny? And yet even this would not totally cure the evil.—The laws already in being are *ineffectual*; and it is much to be wiſhed, that ſome new law were made, *provided it could be ſo well digeſted, as to ſteer betwixt the extremes of lenity and ſeverity*; but there are many *inconveniences* which *free-born* ſubjects will ſubmit to, *of their own choice*, that the notion of *law* would render inſupportable. So far as *reaſon* and *religion* have any power over the *mind*, your good work may be accompliſhed, without the authority of the *civil magiſtrate:* and ſurely no body can pretend to ſay, it *is not poſſible* that reaſon and religion can produce the end propoſed. Would *human laws* be of ſufficient force, to prevent mankind from degenerating into a ſpecies of *unnatural brutes*, were *religion*, and the *perſuaſive* calls of *humanity*, quite out of the queſtion? When theſe women, who offer themſelves as objects of this charity, are *reminded* that there is a *God*, and a *ſtate of rewards* for *good*, and of *puniſhments* for *evil* actions, after death, it will ſurely *rouſe* the attention of *ſome* of them: I ſay *reminded*, for it is to be feared that many, even of theſe, have *forgotten* what they were once taught, and that others are properly of *no religion*.

As to a *coercive* law to accompliſh a reformation, however neceſſary it may be in the great view of correcting the *vices* of the people; in the caſe of

 *penitence*,

*penitence*, which is the true foundation on which your charity ſtands, to compel women to *repent*, is an abſurdity in terms. A vigorous exertion of power in a legiſlature, and the *attention* of good magiſtrates to their duty, do marvellous things, towards the reforming the *manners* of a people; but the remedy againſt proſtitution is one of thoſe circumſtances, which, as I have juſt obſerved, depends ſo much on the virtue of *individuals*, that with us, who are unhappily ſo little awed by the fear of puniſhments, we muſt *undermine theſe works of Satan*, or make a *breach* in them, before we can take them by ſtorm. Your deſign may prepare the way for ſome law that is conſiſtent; and it will contribute to ſet the vigilance of the *good magiſtrate*, and *truly honeſt man*, in the moſt amiable point of light: he will now have it in his power to point out the rewards of virtue to the *real penitent*, as well as to hold up a *rod* for the puniſhment of the *incorrigible*.

We need but ſtep out of doors, to ſee what *ſituation* we are in at preſent. To ſay nothing of harlots, who figure at the top of life, whether *theſe* are more or leſs dangerous, where ſhall we find ſuch an *abandoned race* as ſome of the lower ſorts, who infeſt the moſt *public ſtreets of London*? The number of proſtitutes is ſo great, *in the evening*, not to mention their various appearances *at noon-day*, that we ſhould doubt whether every female we meet, is not an *harlot*, if the women of this profeſſion were not generally diſtinguiſhed by their open *ſollicitations* to paſſengers, and a certain *effrontery* in which *modeſty* has no ſhare. It is true, they are ſometimes *apprehended*, but this frequently occaſions freſh iniquity, and *another kind of proſtitution*. How often the laws are rendered ſubſervient to the avarice of petty officers of juſtice, is a fact more eaſy to be *lamented* than *deſcribed*, and of which many will *complain*, and few attempt to *remedy* the evil.

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I have already deplored the ſufferings of theſe women, and the calamities they create; the immoral conduct of thoſe who *tempt*, and the infamous behavior of ſuch as expoſe the *tempted* to *miſery*. Without entering minutely into the numerous cauſes of the *diſtreſs* of theſe women, it would be unjuſt to them, whoſe *reformation* we wiſh to ſee, not to take notice that the *chief cauſe* of the utter ruin of many of them, is owing to the *infernal* arts of the keepers of bawdy-houſes, who contrive that *young women* ſhall run into their debt for *lodging*, *diet*, and *clothes*; and then, by the terror of that debt, and the conſequences of it, force them to ſubmit to their helliſh practices. It would be happy if a law were made to afford ſome ſhelter and relief, to open ſome room for theſe unhappy creatures to eſcape from their ruin; for as the caſe now ſtands, the ſacred name of the *law*, is the *great engine* of *debauchery* and *deſtruction*, which theſe bawds make uſe of.

If *ſome officers, whoſe duty it is, were to do their duty, in a proper manner, the bawd, inſtead of being countenanced and protected, would hardly have power to purſue her trade, much leſs to proſecute for falſe debts, or for ſuch as are not ſtrictly due.* It is well known, that there are a ſet of fellows, ſuppoſed to be *miniſters* of *juſtice*, *employed* in enquiring after handſome girls, that are a little in debt, "and if they can contrive to buy up their notes, perhaps at "a *crown in the pound*, they *arreſt* them, *detain* them at their houſe in quality "of a *ſpunging-houſe*, and make their *property* of them. The debt, perhaps "of *two* or *three* pounds, ſtill remains if they were to earn them a *hundred* "pounds; ſo that they are never after, out of their clutches, till they are *rot-*"*ten* and *unfit* for ſervice, when they are caſt into the ſtreets." Happy were it if a *law* could be ſo contrived, without danger to *good ſubjects*, that debts contracted to bawds, or in *notorious bawdy-houſes*, ſhould be conſidered as debts contracted at *play*. The propoſition ſeems to be equally conſiſtent,

and it might *check*, if it did not *prevent* ſuch *lawleſs* practices, under the ſanction of the laws. And if thoſe women were upon their guard, ſo as not to give their notes of hand, it would be a difficult matter to prove, that a bawd truſted a whore, for a *good purpoſe*. But, alas, of all the daughters of *Eve*, theſe girls are the leaſt conſiderate; *fooliſh* in their departure from *virtue*, and, *if poſſible*, ſtill *more fooliſh*, in not knowing how to make *vice* inſtrumental to their ſupport; a *prey* to the *debauchee*, and the *merchandize* of the *artful pimp*, who *triumphs* in their *credulity*. It is undoubtedly a leſs crime againſt God, and the *ſtate*, to take a purſe, than for one of theſe bawds to enſnare a poor girl firſt, and then plunge her into priſon for a debt, the value of which, perhaps, has been paid ten times over. This is an *evil*, which you will, 'ere long, have greater knowledge of; and, I hope, you will be able to obtain ſome remedy for it. For if theſe keepers of bad houſes, find means to *force* women to continue proſtitutes, they will be enabled to declare open war againſt *your inſtitution, in particular*, as they now ſet at defiance *all* laws in *general*, *human* and *divine*. If theſe practices are not ſuppreſſed, the attempt to relieve theſe wretched women, will require ſo much the *greater attention*. As to the bawds taking much pains to miſrepreſent the nature of your inſtitution, I have too much reaſon to believe they have done it, and will continue to do it; but we may hope, that thoſe who have *any ſenſe*, will not be talked out of it, or their good inclinations fruſtrated by perſons, whoſe profeſſion it is to *deceive*, and who having bargained for their ſouls with the *father of lies*, the more company they *drag* with them into the regions of darkneſs, they ſeem to think the leſs miſerable they ſhall be. May heaven *puniſh* them till they become virtuous!

You will ſoon diſcover what a true gallantry of ſpirit it requires, to reſcue theſe unhappy proſtitutes from *ſlavery*; to reſtore them to the arms of their afflicted

flicted parents; and to render them a comfort to their *relations* and *friends*. And if you can thus defend the *laws of God*, you may alſo recover us, in ſome meaſure, to diſcipline, and obedience to *legiſlative* authority, which, I am ſorry to ſay, has long been at a low ebb among *common* people.

Let nothing be wanting to render your deſign effectual to the end propoſed! If *reaſon*, if *perſuaſion*; if the moſt ſuitable encouragement, can make any impreſſion; if the *hopes* of eaſe in this world, or of *happineſs* in the next, can engage the attention of theſe women, I know you will convince them of the benevolence of your intention. Some time, however, will be neceſſary to *perſuade them how well you mean*; and it may be hoped, they will at length learn that *virtue*, in a plain garb, with health and a ſober diet, is preferrable to being dreſſed up like *ſheep* for the altar, and of ſuffering all the dreadful conſequences of an *impious* life.

As you propoſe to give each a part of the produce of her labor, and intend that thoſe who behave well ſhall have a *bounty* alſo, it may be hoped, they will find the greater reaſon to thank God for their deliverance. It is alſo probable, that many of thoſe who are *real* converts, will, by their labor, piety, and modeſty, and their *character* in conſequence of ſuch qualities, recommend themſelves to good huſbands; for it is very eaſy to conceive, that the agreeableneſs of many of theſe women, added to their ability to ſupport themſelves, will tie the bands of ſocial affection much ſtronger, than is uſual in common life, where neither *piety* nor *induſtry* are regarded.

As there is joy in *heaven* over a ſinner that repenteth, there ought to be joy on *earth* alſo. We *lament* the loſs of a *good man* when he leaves this world, but we ought to *ſhudder* at the death of the *unrighteous*. It is this only

only which gives a *deep* anguiſh of ſoul to him whoſe ideas are enlarged, and who looks beyond the *narrow* verge of life. When you ſee theſe women reſtored to a true ſenſe of virtue, you may conſider them as riſing from the grave, and you may ſafely ſhow all the indulgence which the nature of your undertaking will admit of. If by any act of munificence you can put them in a way of ſettling comfortably in the world, your charity will ſhine with redoubled luſtre. This leads me to mention, what notions have been entertained by ſome of the greateſt and beſt of men, in regard to the encouragement of marriage. The learned *Eraſmus* thought the giving dowries one of the *nobleſt* kinds of charity, and bequeathed certain ſums of money to it. And the ingenious baron *Holberg*, who was alſo greatly diſtinguiſhed for his merit, eſtabliſhed a *fund* for that purpoſe, and without doubt, he died with much the greater pleaſure, in the reflexion that he ſhould be inſtrumental in making ſome young ladies the happier, in that ſtate, which it is no indignity to them to ſuppoſe, moſt young women wiſh to be. *His* legacies were confined to the *moſt virtuous* part of the ſex, and conſequently to render them more happy than they were before: you plead for thoſe *who were loſt, and are found*, with a view to alleviate their *miſery*, and render them uſeful. And ſince *pleaſure* chiefly conſiſts in an abſence of *pain*; and as virtue is, in ſome degree, its own reward even with regard to this world; it ſeems to be a higher object of the care of mankind, to relieve the diſtreſſed, than even to augment the happineſs which *virtue* has ſo ſtrong a title to.

If the promiſe of *temporal* as well as *eternal* rewards, will raiſe a glorious emulation amongſt the moſt *virtuous*; may we not hope that it will be inſtrumental alſo in reclaiming the *vicious?* Happineſs is the common end purſued; and we may point out, even to the moſt abandoned of mankind, what are the trueſt *means* to acquire this *end.* —— We may alſo lay it down

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as an invariable maxim, that whatever tends to promote, amongſt the idle and diſſolute, a habit of induſtry which, to all appearance, will produce as great an advantage to the community, as the pecuniary conſideration which is given, to promote that induſtry, amounts to, will in the iſſue be highly beneficial. But, if to induſtry we add the means of *preſerving life*; the improvement of *moral virtue*, and the exerciſe of religious duties; it is, in fact, only making uſe of a *few good things* of a *leſſer* value, to acquire *more good things* of a much *greater value:* and where care is taken to prevent abuſes, this muſt be productive of the greateſt benefit. It ſeems abſurd to entertain a jealouſy, that whilſt we feel the ſad effects of any certain *vice*, that the encouragement of a virtue of an oppoſite nature will promote ſuch vice; and *nothing* but *virtue* ſhould entitle them to ſuch an encouragement.

A *bounty* being thus given to ſuch *reclaimed perſons*, as excel in piety, induſtry, and a ſubmiſſion to a *regular oeconomy*, it will certainly prepare the way to their being married to honeſt and induſtrious men. The happy ends which will be obtained by ſuch a *bounty*, given to the virtuous, with a view to prevent the propagation of miſery and bad example, ſeem to be too obvious to need any farther illuſtration; for, if thoſe, who have been a nuſance, become uſeful members to ſociety, and they receive the rewards of *virtue* as they now receive hire for being *vicious*, the *ends* of *true policy*, and *true charity*, will be anſwered in the higheſt, and moſt *proper* manner, and the *ſtate* will be doubly repaid the charge.

I apprehend from your *plan*, that you do not intend to receive the *diſtempered* till cured, nor the *aged*, but only ſuch as have been *proſtitutes*, and being yet in the prime of life, are in danger of returning to their evil courſe; and alſo *deſirous* to become induſtrious; and above all, ſuch as ſeem to have

have a ſenſe of their guilt, and earneſtly wiſh to give *proof* of their repentance. Under theſe circumſtances, it will be hardly poſſible your eſtabliſhment can degenerate into a *Lock Hoſpital*, as ſome imagine, more than it will become a *common workhouſe*, and, leaſt of all, a houſe of *correction*.

I refer it to your conſideration, if you can by any other means have ſo fair an opportunity of diſcovering the real *character*, and *diſpoſition* of ſuch objects of your charity, as come from hoſpitals, as in the very place where they have been cured of their diſeaſes: and if, during the time of cure, thoſe who are candidates for your beneficence ſhould not be ſeparated from thoſe who do not ſo much as pretend to leave off their iniquity? If an able divine, who knows how to recommend religion, is alſo employed in ſuch hoſpitals, the difficulty of accompliſhing your work, will every day decreaſe. — *Humanity* in *preſerving* their health when *recovered*; *piety* in taking care of their *ſouls*; *policy* in promoting uſeful *induſtry*, will then keep pace with thoſe *charities*, which are ſo well calculated to cure the *diſeaſes* of theſe *unhappy women*.

Every hoſpital eſtabliſhed for the cure of *venereal* diſeaſes, and particularly that which is appropriated to this purpoſe only, will derive a ſanction, and increaſe in reputation, in proportion to the number of patients who become *penitents*, and after they are *cured* prove an honor to ſociety. Thus we ſhall make one inſtitution ſubſervient to another, and render ſuch hoſpitals effectual, to every *great* and *good* purpoſe for which they were eſtabliſhed. They are already temporary expedients to *alleviate* miſery, but they cannot render the objects *happy*, in *this* world, much leſs can they ſecure the *felicity* of the *next*.

SECTION

## SECTION VII.

*The dangerous conſequences of feeding the idle. The duty of chaſtiſing the* vicious, *and of encouraging the* virtuous poor. *The general duty of an active and induſtrious life. The advantages which may ariſe from the ſkilful employment of young female orphans. The great utility of the Magdalen charity. Concluſion, with an invitation to proſtitutes to conſider what their ſituation is.*

YOU will eaſily judge of the zeal with which I eſpouſe the cauſe you have adopted: but whilſt I am pleading in behalf of this pious inſtitution, it is neceſſary to take notice, that if there was leſs *idleneſs* among the working *female* poor, there would not only be fewer *proſtitutes*, but fewer *beggars*, and fewer *thieves:* there would likewiſe be a heavy expence in the *poors-rate* ſaved. — The indulgence of feeding girls and young women who do not work, is a mark of *falſe* tenderneſs, and ſometimes renders charities inſtrumental to debauchery. I have often heard talk of the great difference of the rates, between pariſhes where the poor *work*, and where they are *idle*: and one may naturally conclude, that many who are born to get their bread by labor, do really ſpend their days in idleneſs. This I apprehend to be the caſe amongſt us, more than is obſerved in many other nations, and from hence ariſes the ſtronger reaſon to enter ſeriouſly into the conſideration of your undertaking, even upon *political* principles.

*Lawgivers* and *magiſtrates* have at all times ſuppoſed, that the fear of *death*, or *confinement*; of *compulſive labor*, or *corporal correction*, would either *awe* the wicked, and *prevent* iniquity; or that the actual ſuffering of theſe ſeverities, would *reform* all groſs enormities. But it is a fact too well known, that the *abuſe* of *houſes of correction* is carried to that pitch, with us, as to render them houſes of *corruption*, not of *reformation*. Hence it is probable, that you will ſucceed in the way you propoſe, rather than by any compulſive means, which, to a *free people*, may render the *remedy* as bad as the *diſeaſe*.

Notwithſtanding the mutability of all human affairs; notwithſtanding our *changeable* tempers, we are amazingly conſtant in the great article of public charities; and yet we muſt not pretend to *much virtue*, 'till we pay *more* attention to that part which relates to *piety* and *induſtry*, though leſs *money* be given. The *firſt* will render the objects of theſe charities more *moral*, and conſequently leſs inclined to impoſe on their benefactors; the *laſt*, will enable many of them to get their bread without ſuch charitable aſſiſtance. Some charities, from their very nature, ought in all reaſon to *decreaſe*; for, if acts of beneficence do not create *leſs want*, and *leſs miſery*; if thoſe who have been relieved once, ſhall for this and no better reaſon, conclude that they have a right to be relieved again, the meaſure of ſuch moral obligations, between the *rich* and *poor*, will be confounded; the *virtue* of the *Donor* will pervert its own end, and create that very miſery which he intended to prevent. It is an obſervation but too well founded, that when the generality of the common people have worn off a ſenſe of *duty*, and though *able to work*, are not aſhamed to eat the *bread of idleneſs*, great miſery and abuſe of charity will creep in; and if *corruption*, and *bad examples*, turn *panders* to *exceſs* and *luxury*, many *wants* will be created, even among the poor, which have

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no exiſtence from *neceſſity*; and which, otherwiſe, would have had no exiſtence at all. But it is in vain to contemplate the evils which have made ſuch inroads upon us, unleſs we reſolve upon meaſures to prevent their *progreſs*. If the *vicious poor* were oftener chaſtiſed, and *compelled to work*, agreeably to the great *order of providence*; and if the *virtuous poor* were more *timely* relieved with gentleneſs and humanity; if a conſtant *attendance* were given, and a greater exertion of ſkill *ſhewn* in the oeconomy of *pariſh affairs*, we ſhould not find ſo much money expended, *ſeemingly in vain*: there would not be ſuch *enormous* ſums devoted to charitable purpoſes, and yet our ſtreets abounding with objects, who are a *ſhame* to *government*, and a *diſgrace* to human nature. — It is a happineſs we enjoy in this commercial nation, where nature has been ſo indulgent to us with regard to the *fertility* of the earth, that perhaps there is no country in the world, where the people may be ſo eaſily ſet to work; but, as our *riches* are *great*, ſo is the indolence of the oppulent; and, as our *liberty* is *ſacred*, libertiniſm and a contempt of diſcipline will often ariſe from it.

Men of ſpeculative minds may refine as they pleaſe, things will have their courſe: on the *one ſide*, even riches, with indolence, and licentiouſneſs, will certainly produce miſery: but, on the *other*, virtue, ſkill, and vigilance, will ſhew their effects in *preventing*, or alleviating, the *evils* of life. It ought to be conſtantly inſtilled as a *ruling principle*, in the minds of both ſexes, and of all ranks; that *man* is an *active being*, and if he is not taught to do *good*, he will certainly do *miſchief*. *Idleneſs* is very juſtly called the *root of evil in general*, but it is particularly ſo in the caſe of proſtitution. — Of all ſtations in life, the moſt deplorable is that of perſons who are brought up in affluence, and reduced to poverty, without any means of ſupport from their own ſkill and induſtry. This I take to be

the caſe of many proſtitutes, who are the daughters of poor tradeſmen, or of clergymen of poor livings in the country. If, by means of your inſtitution, ſuch perſons learn to work, though they begin late in life, they may provide themſelves a comfortable ſupport. A woman who is miſtreſs of a trade, is a *fortune* to a huſband, and in caſe of his death may provide for her children, as many widows do, who have had the happineſs to be educated in an induſtrious manner, and in the way which nature ſeems to have appointed for both ſexes, equally the ſame, though the object for employment is different. It has been often obſerved, that there are many trades, now in the hands of *men*, in which *women* might do as well, and ſome which their natural ingenuity would enable them to carry on much better.

The remedy of theſe *evils* has long engaged our thoughts, but war muſt teach us to be ſtrictly circumſpect. The *ſkilful* and the *active* muſt help to lighten the burthen of the *rich*, as well as of the *poor*, and, by *ſaving money*, aſſiſt in the ſupport of the *war*, that, when it is happily finiſhed, we may be the better enabled to cultivate the *arts of peace*. Thus we may render our charities equally ſubſervient to the *honor of God*, the *ſervice of the ſtate*, and the *temporal* and *eternal* welfare of our fellow-ſubjects.

With regard to ſuch as are only in *danger* of being corrupted, it muſt be confeſſed, that in *ſome caſes* it is more eaſy to *prevent* than to *cure a diſeaſe*, yet it does not follow, that ſuch cure is to be neglected. When the propoſition was firſt made *for an eſtabliſhment of charity-houſes for friendleſs girls and repenting proſtitutes*, they were juſtly diſtinguiſhed as two very different objects: and for as much as the denomination of *friendleſs girls* might take in vaſt crowds, from every part of the kingdom, the ſupport of which no

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private ſubſcription could compaſs, the propoſal required much *conſideration*. It alſo appeared, that if the *overſeers* of pariſh work-houſes, and the guardians of charity-ſchools were to do *their duty* effectually, and *employ* all young perſons, within their jurisdiction, in uſeful labor, there could be no occaſion for any ſuch *new inſtitution*. It was for this reaſon, I preſume, that you firſt *reſolved* to purſue the plan for ſuch relief of theſe women, for whom no proviſion has been yet made, as might recover and preſerve them.

On the other hand it is very apparent, that *there are*, in this great metropolis, a number of *young girls*, entitled to protection, of whom, to our great ſhame, no pariſh, or ſchool, takes any cognizance, and who can hardly avoid becoming the prey of *luſt*, *diſeaſe*, and *miſery*. —— The deſign of a well-regulated workhouſe for *vagabond girls*, may prove a great relief to many miſerable objects; and if ſuch an inſtitution can be managed in ſo judicious a manner, as to ſerve as an *example* to pariſh officers, and a *guide* to guardians of charity-ſchools, throughout this kingdom, it will operate in a great meaſure to the end in view: and if a proper proviſion is not yet made for the relief of ſuch *vagabond children*, it is much to be wiſhed that ſome *law* for this purpoſe were enacted.

In *Rome* they have an eſtabliſhment for poor female orphans, called the order of the *Holy ſacrament*, where they are taught ſuch trades, as they can live by when they come into the world: they make manufactures of wool, both cloth and ſtuffs, at the ſame time that they obſerve great exactneſs in their devotions. There is hardly any country, *proteſtant* or *popiſh*, *mahommedan* or *pagan*, but ſhews more tenderneſs than we ſeem to have had for ſuch young girls as wander about the ſtreets in filth and rags; for whilſt we forget *our duty* to them, they ſeem totally unacquainted with

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every *moral* obligation, and accordingly we find them ſo loſt to a ſenſe of *their duty to God*, as hardly to know that there is one.

If ſuch charity ſhould be found uſeful and *expedient*, you will, I preſume, conſider the *young vagabond female orphans* alſo, if any number of them are found in the eaſtern quarters of the town, *where there is the moſt ſhew of police*. This I apprehend to be your deſign: but your firſt attempting the *Magdalen Charity*, is a proof of your diſtinction: if this is not the moſt *eſſential*, it is the moſt *difficult* undertaking, and will require the moſt ſkill and circumſpection. And for the ſame reaſon that the *cure* of a diſeaſe, ſeems to be more interreſting, in a direct view, and ſometimes more *certain* in the *operation*, than the prevention of it, there is the utmoſt reaſon for you to continue ſteady to your intentions, in the purſuit of which, it is probable, you will have buſineſs enough on your hands, though you were never to take up the other object.

After all that can be ſaid on the ſubject of your undertaking, it muſt ſtand on *piety*: real repentance is the only true foundation which can ſupport it, and much will depend on your *vigilance*, and *good ſenſe*. I make no doubt but that every precaution will be uſed; and if your *officers* enter with zeal and ſpirit into your ideas, and endevor to make reflexions on their experience, and to furniſh ſuch hints as may be drawn from it, you can hardly fail of ſucceſs. — *No body* doubts of your ſincerity or abilities; and, it may be preſumed, the propriety of the deſign will every day merit the attention of our fellow-ſubjects, more and more, and engage them to ſubſcribe to it with an *open heart*, and a *liberal hand*, as well knowing that, *in the moſt direct view*, they will ſave the *wretched* from *perdition*.

Before I conclude, I cannot help remarking, what *infinite* pains ſome men take to *deceive* themſelves; *half* ſo much labor to ſet themſelves *right*, would anſwer their *true* end. Among other abſurdities, it is the common cant of libertines of both ſexes, that *God* never made man to be *damned*. If they know their own meaning, it muſt be this, that man being made, and as his maker certainly intended his happineſs, *he muſt be happy*, whether he anſwers the conditions of that happineſs or not. — Is not this an opinion more abſurd than was ever entertained, even by the *Pagan* world? —The *learned* and the *illiterate* may equally *bewilder* themſelves in their enquiries, but ſtill they muſt recur to this concluſion, that we were *made* free, and are *rational* agents; that we *are free*, and as ſuch, a *free* and *rational* obedience muſt, from the very nature of things, be expected from us. Could God be the judge of mankind if there was nothing to be judged of? — And what *ſentence* can we conceive, can be paſt, where there is no *puniſhment* for *offenders?* — And for what can we imagine men will be puniſhed, but for their *diſobedience* to the divine command? — Wretched mortals, thus to endevor to put out the eyes of their own underſtanding, that under the ſhelter of darkneſs they may gratify the animal part of their compoſition, or pleaſe ſome favourite paſſion, though it be but for a *moment*.

*So it is*; the *weak*, and the *wicked* part of mankind, generally incline to adapt their *notions* to their *practice*, and talk of the infinite *mercies* of God, as if they meant only to *flatter* him out of his *juſtice*. As it is *blaſphemy* to challenge our Maker for creating us what *we are*, or for making the conditions of our happineſs ſuch as *they really are*; ſo it is the groſſeſt *folly* to imagine, he will reverſe his *decrees*. If we really *believe* in him; if we have any pretence to the privileges of reaſon, we ſhall indeed find the higheſt conſolation, in the contemplation of his *mercy*, whilſt the terror

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of his *juſtice* will keep us in awe: we ſhall do honor to the *power* he has entruſted us with, and receive with joy the *aſſiſtances* he has promiſed; and thus, inſtead of *rebelling* againſt his *authority*, we ſhall find infinite reaſon to pay divine honors to his *clemency*, as the ſupreme lawgiver; and to *adore* his *goodneſs* as the *tender parent* of mankind. Let us ever remember that our *belief* depends greatly on our *practice*, as well as our *practice* on our *belief*. Every one may *ſee*, if they chuſe to look, what God has been pleaſed to reveal of himſelf: and what his *will* is towards mankind. Thoſe who fondly imagine that he *means* the contrary of what he *ſays*; or that our revelation is *fabulous*, may, as I ſet out by obſerving, as well diſcard *chriſtianity* at once. We muſt either give up the *bible* and *teſtament*, or *renounce* our *reaſon*, or *forſake* our *ſins*.

The taſk of teaching theſe unhappy proſtitutes the *great law of conſideration*, will be *glorious*, in proportion as their preſent ſituation is *dreadful*. What a *trade* is that, the wages of which is everlaſting perdition!—If they ſaw the real ſtate of their condition, and the ruin gaping wide to ſwallow them, they could not live in open contempt of the laws of *God* and *man*, and in defiance of conſcience; their ſouls would ſhudder at the thought! their minds would be amazed with terror! If they were made ſenſible what clouds of darkneſs hang over their proſpect of futurity, *remorſe* would rend their hearts! *Thought* may, indeed, be in ſome meaſure baniſhed, and the mind become inſenſible of fear, or ſorrow; but will the ſoul therefore ceaſe to be immortal? — Or will a God of infinite juſtice not puniſh for offences, the *habitual* exerciſe of which, occaſions this very inſenſibility? On the other hand, they will be convinced, that heaven has boundleſs joy in ſtore for *thoſe* who *repent* of their miſdeeds. That the practice of virtue will comfort the heart, and exilerate the ſpirits, rejoice the ſoul,

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and exhibit a ſcene of *pleaſure*, and *ſelf-complacency*, beyond the power of language to deſcribe; and ſince life, at beſt, is balanced on a point ſubject to fall, even by the motion of the air, let thoſe who have been moſt expoſed to danger, rejoice moſt, when they happily finiſh their journey, and whatever *temptations* or *diſtreſſes*, *diſappointments*, or *misfortunes*, they may have met with on the road, let them cheer each other, and reſt in pious confidence, that they ſhall at laſt be ſafely conducted to the manſions of everlaſting felicity!

Let me once more obſerve, that it is *amazing* how far prejudices often betray the moſt *virtuous* and ſenſible perſons, into a belief of what the moſt *vicious* and fooliſh are ſolicitous to give credit to, namely, that it is an abſurdity to think of *repentance* among *proſtitutes*. If nothing but a miracle could reform this vice, it might be abſurd indeed to expect ſuch miracle, but I apprehend that this vulgar error has taken its riſe from *good policy* not rightly underſtood. We may now appeal to *facts*. Whilſt I am yet writing, I hear that you have taken in a number of poor girls, who give every token of being what they pretend, ſincerely deſirous to forſake their evil courſe of life, conſcious of their offence, and glad to make atonement for it; that they live with the *ſimplicity* of young children, and the *underſtanding* of women who know *their* happineſs is the only object *you* have in view.

The *utility* of your undertaking muſt be *apparent* to all the world. If you afford theſe women the means of *employment*, you will inſtruct ſome in *uſeful arts* who never learnt any before; you will give others a *habit* of induſtry, as well as an *opportunity* of reforming their *morals*; and reſcue their *bodies* and *their ſouls*. Thus may we flatter ourſelves that the moſt ſenſible, the moſt virtuous, the moſt pious and diſtinguiſhed ladies amongſt

us, will ſhew the moſt *commiſeration*, and pride themſelves in promoting this charity: while *men* in general, thoſe who are the *leaſt*, as well as thoſe who are the *moſt* converſant with *harlots*, will find ſufficient reaſon to contribute towards the eſtabliſhment and ſupport of it. I hope *both ſexes*, will promote an undertaking, ſo well calculated at once to prove a *bleſſing* to the *commonwealth*, and an *honor* to *human nature*, that we may *live* to ſee true divinity, and true policy unite, and die in ſo much the more *exalted hope*, and *pious confidence*, that we ſhall receive our reward in that ſtate, which *every moment* brings ſo much nearer to us.

Let it not be *coldly* ſaid, "*theſe women are ſelf-puniſhers, and their miſery the effect of their own folly:*" Alas, we are all *fooliſh*, though not in the ſame manner or degree. Our *worldly* misfortunes, and our *ſpiritual* diſtreſſes, *generally* ariſe from our *paſſions*, our *weakneſs*, or *perverſe* inclinations; and if no ſuccour ought to be afforded in ſuch diſtreſs as this, when is it to be afforded? God forbid that the *greateſt* calamity ſhould be the *leaſt* conſidered! There are many inſtances in which human laws exact *atonement* for crimes, and, without which, ſociety could not exiſt. In ſuch caſes the *Perſian* adage takes place, *they* MUST *ſleep in the bed which they have made!* But you intend to convert and *ſave* ſinners by the means of *piety* and *labor*, not to *deſtroy* them by the ſword of juſtice.

Perhaps ſome of theſe women have never been *properly* taught, that the ſame *divine lawgiver*, on whoſe authority we found the *certain* belief of the *immortality* of the ſoul, has declared that he ſhall one day denounce the ſevereſt *malediction* againſt thoſe who die *impenitent*. *Go, ye curſed, into everlaſting fire!* — Depart from me, into that *unutterable* miſery, into which your own *impenitence* has plunged you. But, to thoſe who have *repented*,

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in ſincerity of heart, and, by a ſober and religious life, have given proof of ſuch *repentance*, he aſſures us, *praiſe* and *applauſe* will be given, more harmoniouſly ſweet, than the moſt ſeraphic ſtrains of muſic, and far more tranſporting than the united force of all the captivating delights this world can afford! *Come ye bleſſed of my father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you.* Be happy. — Be *happy* for ever; immortally happy, as far beyond your conceptions, as *heaven* is exalted above *earth*, or the duration of *eternity* exceeds a *moment!*

Thus have you ſet a view of *eaſe* and *comfort*, *diſeaſe* and *miſery*, *life* and *death*, *heaven* and *hell*, before the eyes of theſe poor women. To thoſe various methods in which *mercy* is generally offered, you add another *ſtriking proof*, how much the hearts of men are influenced by that *benignant power* which governs the world. May your *piety* be communicated to others, and produce all the happy effects of this truly charitable, and truly *pious* inſtitution!

*F I N I S.*

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